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EDITORIAL NOTES

NEW YEAR—NEW OPPORTUNITIES.

With its three hundred and sixty-five clean, unmarked pages, a new year has come to us to use or abuse; to write things upon them that will endure and be of benefit to the people, to the profession of which we are humble units, to the communities in which we severally live and work and have our influence; or to be left blank, soiled, scrawled upon or smudged. There is enough to do, God knows, in the way of helping ourselves and of helping the people whose needs and ills and sufferings we tend; and we must not forget that in helping ourselves to a better living, to a fuller life, we are helping the people. A physician poor in purse is handicapped to the extent that he cannot provide himself with the proper things of knowledge or material equipment with which to give the best that is in him to his patients. This we should not fail to recognize or to make our patients understand, as we have opportunity from time to time. There is nothing in the world more dangerous than a cheap lawyer except a cheap doctor. Let the new year see you follow more accurate and careful business methods in dealing with the business side of your work; no one respects the man he can defraud or cheapen, and your patients will respect you more for it. Do not let your accounts run for a year or two and then try to collect what you can; send out your bills promptly and after a year of moderate effort to collect, see that the debtor is forced to pay, if he is in a position to do so. Orderliness in business methods will have a beneficial effect upon your professional work, for it will induce more orderly thinking. Also, it will

provide you with more income with which to get books and journals and instruments, or enable you to travel and visit other physicians and see how their work compares with your own; where you fall short and where you go ahead. Above all, do not forget to do your own best work for the benefit of your own county medical society; it will help you and will help every member of the profession and will stimulate a greater respect for the entire profession in your community. Nothing hurts us all so much as rows amongst medical men themselves. A fight between two physicians not only hurts them both, no matter which one is in the right, but it hurts the whole medical profession by belittling its members in the eyes of the community. In every county where you find a good, active, well-knit county medical society, there you will find the medical profession looked up to and respected. There is plenty to be written on these clean pages of this year's new book; will you write something worth while?

UNION HEALTH DEPARTMENTS.

All over the country cities are engaged in becoming acquainted with themselves by means of efficiency surveys. These surveys have grown out of the perfectly natural desire of the taxpayer to know how his money is being spent, and whether he is getting value received. Wherever these surveys have been instituted, the health department is primarily the one which shows marked weakness in comparison to the other departments of administration. The reason of this is evident. As long as city councils and county boards of supervisors have the impression that the chief functions of a health department are limited to the placarding and fumigation of habitations after certain diseases, and the investigation and removal of the causes of bad smells, so long will the appropriations for health work continue to be inadequate.

The medical profession is largely to blame for this impression. It needs a vision far beyond that of the man trained in curative medicine, to see the intense broad social significance of preventive medicine. Workers for social betterment have long had this vision and forced a tardy recognition on the medical profession. There are many phases of the subject that are slowly slipping from us due to our Rip Van Winkle sleep of a generation past. At the Summer Session of the University of California there was a psychological clinic running without an M. D. degree on the instructing staff. This is only an example of how the broad social preventive fields have escaped our tillage, and their fruits will be garnered by others than the sons of Aesculapius.

There are many reasons why the medical man does not, *ipso facto*, make a good health officer. He is, it is true, good raw material, but he needs much training. First of all, he must be unhampered by a private practice; secondly, he must have the ability to view mankind in the mass rather than as individuals; and finally he must be trained to the new profession. Within the